

Proverbs 16:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Analysis

Wickedness is an 'abomination to kings' because 'the throne is established by righteousness.' The Hebrew 'kun' (established) means to be firmly set, stable, and enduring. Unrighteous rule is inherently unstable; only righteousness provides lasting foundation for governance. This reflects Reformed political theology: governments exist to restrain evil and promote good (Romans 13:1-7). When rulers embrace wickedness, their kingdoms crumble. This principle applies to all institutions—families, churches, businesses. Righteousness establishes; wickedness destroys.

Historical Context

Israel's history demonstrated this principle repeatedly. Righteous kings like David, Hezekiah, and Josiah strengthened the nation; wicked kings like Ahab, Manasseh, and Jehoiakim brought disaster and exile.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you see the connection between righteousness and stability in nations, organizations, and families?
2. What is your responsibility to promote righteousness in the institutions you're part of?
3. How does this verse inform your prayers for civil authorities?

Interlinear Text

בְּצִדְקַת הָ	כִּי	כִּי שְׁעָר	עָשָׂה וְתַ	מִלְכִים	תֹּעַבְתָּ
It is an abomination	to kings	to commit	wickedness	H3588	by righteousness
H8441	H4428	H6213	H7562		H6666
וְיַ	כִּי	כִּי	וְתַ	מִלְכִים	תֹּעַבְתָּ

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 25:5 (Righteousness): Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

Proverbs 29:14 (Kingdom): The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

Luke 12:48 (Parallel theme): But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Proverbs 28:9 (Parallel theme): He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Revelation 19:11 (Righteousness): And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Psalms 99:4 (Righteousness): The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

Proverbs 20:18 (Parallel theme): Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

Deuteronomy 25:16 (Righteousness): For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God.